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PRESS RELEASE

U.S. AND BANGLADESH IMPROVE CARGO SECURITY AT THE PORT OF CHITTAGONG

WASHINGTON, D.C., NOVEMBER 17 -- The United States National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) announced today that it has signed a Memorandum of Understanding to partner with Bangladesh's Ministry of Shipping and other government agencies to install radiation detection equipment and associated infrastructure at the Port of Chittagong. NNSA will also provide training to Bangladeshi officials to use this equipment. The Port of Chittagong is a major cargo container hub in South Asia and a strategic transit point in the international maritime trading system. The United States is the largest destination of exports from Bangladesh.

"Considering Bangladesh's strategic South Asian location, this agreement is a major step forward in preventing nuclear materials from being smuggled through maritime cargo container traffic," said NNSA Deputy Administrator for Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation William Tobey. "NNSA appreciates Bangladesh's willingness to cooperate with us in this critical mission and we look forward to continuing our joint efforts."

The work is part of the Megaports Initiative, a program under the NNSA's Second Line of Defense Program, which aims to strengthen the capability of foreign governments to deter, detect, and interdict illicit trafficking in nuclear and other radioactive materials across international borders and through the global maritime shipping system. The Megaports Initiative provides radiation detection equipment, training, and technical

support to key international seaports to scan cargo containers for nuclear and other radioactive materials.

Around the world, the Megaports Initiative is currently operational in 19 ports and work is underway at over 20 additional ports in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe, the Middle East, and Africa.

Established by Congress in 2000, NNSA is a separately organized agency within the U.S. Department of Energy responsible for enhancing national security through the military application of nuclear science. NNSA maintains and enhances the safety, security, reliability and performance of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile without nuclear testing; works to reduce global danger from weapons of mass destruction; provides the U.S. Navy with safe and effective nuclear propulsion; and responds to nuclear and radiological emergencies in the United States and abroad. Visit www.nnsa.energy.gov for more information.

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Note: A Bangla translation of this press release is also available at the American Center. If you are interested in the translation, please call the American Center Press Section, Tel: 8837150-4, Fax: 9885688; e-mail: DhakaPA@state.gov; Website: <http://dhaka.usembassy.gov>